United Nations A/63/125

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 July 2008

Original: English

Sixty-third session
Item 115 of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of the United Nations system

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/257 on strengthening the capacity of the Organization to advance the disarmament agenda

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–4	2
II.	Implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/257	5–49	2
III.	Conclusions	50–59	11

* A/63/50.

08-42165 (E) 310708

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/257 on strengthening the capacity of the Organization to advance the disarmament agenda, the General Assembly affirmed its support for the establishment of an Office for Disarmament Affairs, while maintaining the budgetary autonomy and integrity of the existing structures and functions of the then Department for Disarmament Affairs, and the appointment of a High Representative as the head of the Office for Disarmament Affairs at the rank of Under-Secretary-General.

2. Further to paragraph 3 of the resolution, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session a report on the financial, administrative and budgetary implications arising from the appointment of the High Representative and the implementation of the mandates assigned to the Office for Disarmament Affairs (A/62/643).

3. With regard to the request contained in paragraph 4 of resolution 61/257 for the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, it should be noted that the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs made two statements in the First Committee on 6 and 16 October 2007 respectively, informing the Committee of the activities of the Office.

4. In paragraph 5 of resolution 61/257, the General Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for its consideration at its sixty-third session a report to review the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

II. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/257

5. The proposals made in 2007 by the Secretary-General to establish the Office for Disarmament Affairs underscored the importance he attaches to revitalizing the international disarmament agenda, as well as the effectiveness of the United Nations in this area. In promoting his proposals, the Secretary-General also took into consideration Member States' expressed interest in finding ways to address the challenges in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation (see A/61/749, annex II).

6. In his vision for 2008 and beyond, the Secretary-General highlighted the need to reinvigorate the collective response to disarmament and non-proliferation by: addressing long-standing deadlocks in nuclear disarmament, stepping up efforts to combat the scourge of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons that undermine the security of individuals, countries, and regions that can least afford it; and addressing the threats that are growing fastest — those facilitated by the revolution in the life sciences. The Secretary-General also stressed the need to follow up on the decision of world leaders in 2005 to promote biotechnology benefits to developing countries while mitigating the risks of misuse.

Advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and the civil society

7. The commitment of the Secretary-General to disarmament and non-proliferation and the promotion and support to multilateral efforts to strengthen the implementation of existing multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms limitation agreements, as well as to encourage new inclusive, complementary and mutually reinforcing initiatives had been communicated consistently, including by incorporating these issues more systematically into the Secretary-General's speeches and statements.

8. To that end, the Secretary-General played a vital role in building and activating support in the above-mentioned areas. He attended and addressed the inaugural meeting of the 2008 session of the Conference on Disarmament, calling upon members to move forward by agreeing to the proposal of the six presidents for 2007 for negotiations to begin on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and to undertake substantive discussions on other core issues: nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances, and preventing an arms race in outer space.

9. The Secretary-General called upon foreign ministers and other political leaders to participate in the Conference on Disarmament in order to encourage a return to productive work, stressing that top-level political leadership and cooperation is needed to forge a fresh consensus on future projects. Responding to the Secretary-General's call, the Conference on Disarmament has been very well attended at the highest political level during the period covered by the report; a considerable increase over previous years. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Tunisia, the Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Administrator of the National Nuclear Safety Administration of the United States of America, all addressed the Conference in Geneva. Subsequently, during and after the high-level segment of the 2008 session in March, the Vice-President of Colombia, the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Foreign Ministers of Argentina, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania and Slovakia, as well as other high-level representatives from Japan, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine addressed the Conference.

10. In 2007 and 2008, the Secretary-General addressed the United Nations Disarmament Commission, calling upon Member States to move forward in a spirit of compromise and accommodation, underscoring that failure to advance the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda was not an option, as the consequences could jeopardize many other goals of the Charter of the United Nations as well as the security and well-being of all Member States. The Secretary-General noted that, despite a collective awareness about the risks and challenges, the world is still confronted with twin dangers: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the excessive accumulation of conventional arms. Multilateral cooperation remains absolutely indispensable in pursuing the noble goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

11. The establishment of the Office for Disarmament Affairs reinforces the advocacy potential of the Organization in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Under the leadership of the High Representative for Disarmament

Affairs, the Office plays an effective role and enhanced its engagement and cooperation with Member States, intergovernmental organizations and civil society.

12. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs participated and/or represented the Secretary-General in an increased number of conferences, meetings and seminars. Since his appointment in July 2007, he has delivered 33 addresses, as well as 5 statements and/or messages on behalf of the Secretary-General.

13. A significant number of these speeches focused on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues in response to the interest manifested by the organizers of pertinent prestigious events. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs invariably calls for full compliance with existing treaty obligations in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, verifiable and greater reductions in stockpiles of nuclear weapons, greater transparency, diminished reliance on nuclear weapons in security policies and universalization of existing norms. He also presses the need for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the negotiation and early conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices, and supports the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and their bringing into force as well as encourages the establishment of new ones.

14. Furthermore, the High Representative consistently highlights the efforts to promote multilateral norms in such fields as illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the transparency of conventional arms transfers, holdings and production, transfers of conventional arms and the regulation of missiles.

15. These efforts have complemented and fed into recent initiatives both at governmental and non-governmental levels. There is an evident resurgence of interest in and growing commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. This is a hopeful indication that the international community may be close to turning the corner and that what is needed now is a sustained effort to maintain forward momentum and translation of words into action. The United Nations can contribute to the success of these efforts and initiatives and help to build support for concrete action in advancing the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

16. An important area of activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs involves information dissemination, raising public awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation issues and maintaining close liaison with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, other research and educational institutions outside the United Nations, and with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Office continues to implement the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme. To heighten public awareness on disarmament issues, and as part of its information-sharing activities, the Office disseminates to Member States and the international community comprehensive, objective and factual information on disarmament and security matters through its website, publications and other activities.

17. In addition, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/95 on the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to release electronic Disarmament Updates to all Permanent Missions in New York and Geneva and to civil society at large. The Office published three *Occasional Papers* as well as *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* that are available in hard copy and electronically on the web page of the

Office. In 2008, Disarmament Study Series, No. 32, *Verification in all its Aspects, including the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Verification*[1] has also been released. It is noteworthy to mention that between April 2007 and April 2008, the Office for Disarmament Affairs briefed more than a thousand students from all over the world on disarmament issues.

18. As stipulated in General Assembly resolutions 59/93 and 61/73 on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, launched educational disarmament and non-proliferation web pages on the United Nations *CyberSchoolBus* site focusing on nuclear disarmament and small arms. This also responds to the recommendations made by the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), which called for increased disarmament and non-proliferation online content. The CD *Nobel Voices for Disarmament: 1901-2001* was issued in November 2007 and will be available as a supplementary educational tool on the United Nations *CyberSchoolBus* website. From 8 to 10 August 2007, the Office for Disarmament Affairs joined the Department for Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Public Information, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in co-sponsoring an educational symposium in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the International Institute on Peace Education.

19. Additionally, video messages by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs addressing specific issues, such as the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the fortieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the landmark Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence and the World Federation of United Nations Associations initiative devoted to a nuclear-weapon-free world have been posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

20. The screening of four documentary films entitled *Hiroshima Ground Zero*, HBO's *White Light, Black Rain: The Destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*, *The Final Frontier: Explorers or Warriors* and *Angelus Bell*, all relating to nuclear and outer space issues took place in April 2007 at United Nations Headquarters for delegations of all Member States and civil society representatives. These documentaries were also shown during the session of the First Committee of the General Assembly in 2007.

21. The Office for Disarmament Affairs carried out a significant number of activities (illustrated below) in support of multilateral efforts on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, as well as in support of efforts in the field of conventional disarmament, especially with regard to major weapons systems, small arms and light weapons, landmines and cluster munitions. Through its regional centres for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the Office has also contributed to generating a more active involvement in disarmament and non-proliferation related issues of regional and subregional stakeholders.

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.IX.5.

Promotion and support of multilateral efforts on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons

22. The Office for Disarmament Affairs actively supported the efforts of Member States in the implementation of resolutions in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, in particular nuclear weapons, in order to help maintain international peace and security and to contribute to global efforts against terrorism.

23. The Office for Disarmament Affairs organized, conducted, serviced and/or co-sponsored some 40 events pursuant to specific mandates, emanating from the General Assembly, or in support of the Office's long-standing mandated responsibilities as well as in response to requests from Member States. These include meetings of bodies of the United Nations disarmament machinery, as well as multilateral disarmament treaty meetings (such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention), meetings of States parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons) and their Protocols and meetings of States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine Ban Convention).

24. As requested by parties, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to provide expert advice on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, especially in connection with the Conference on Disarmament and in the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

25. The preparatory process for the 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is well under way. The first session of the Preparatory Committee adopted its agenda and laid a sound foundation for the second session, which took a number of important procedural decisions to focus its work on substantive discussions. The Office for Disarmament Affairs provided administrative and organizational arrangements for these sessions as well as extensive substantive support to the chairpersons and to States parties. The Office will provide similar support and assistance to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference.

26. The Secretary-General, in his capacity as Depositary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and at the request of the majority of ratifying States, convened the fifth Conference Facilitating the Entry Into Force, which was held in Vienna in September 2007. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, in partnership with the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization provided substantive and administrative support to the Conference. It also provided support for the implementation of the measures adopted in the Final Declaration, including the promotion of the understanding of the Treaty through advocacy, universalization and outreach efforts.

27. The annual meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention was held in December 2007 with the substantive and secretariat support provided by the Office for Disarmament Affairs. As mandated by the Sixth Review Conference, an Implementation Support Unit was established in the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs to support the meetings agreed by the Conference, to assist national implementation, and to promote confidence-building measures and universal participation in the Convention. The Unit, which was fully staffed in August 2007, presented its first report during the 2007 Meeting of States Parties.

28. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/288 entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy", in which Member States invited the United Nations system to develop, together with Member States and relevant international organizations, a single comprehensive database on biological incidents, the Office for Disarmament Affairs initiated in July 2007 informal consultations with governmental experts and representatives of several international organizations. The database is intended to serve as a platform for receiving detailed technical information on biological incidents worldwide to assist in preventing and combating bioterrorism and to build State capacity. In April 2008, the Office for Disarmament Affairs started the development of the software platform for the Biological Incident Database to provide a secure web-based data entry tool for reporting biological incidents. This system is already available for pilot use by interested Member States.

29. In resolution 60/288, Member States also encouraged the Secretary-General to update the roster of experts and laboratories, as well as technical guidelines and procedures, available to him for the timely and efficient investigation of alleged use of biological and chemical weapons. In response to a March 2007 request from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, a number of Member States submitted nominations exceeding 100 experts and 30 laboratories. Based on this information, the Office for Disarmament Affairs is in the process of establishing an electronic database to facilitate the timely selection of experts and laboratories in the event that a request for an investigation is made to the Secretary-General.

30. In August and November 2007, the Office for Disarmament Affairs also convened two meetings of governmental experts and representatives of a number of international organizations, including the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organization for Animal Health, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Health Organization. These meetings resulted in an update of the technical appendices of the 1989 Guidelines and Procedures of the Secretary-General's mechanism for the timely and efficient investigation of reports of possible use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons, taking into account internationally available expertise.

31. The Office for Disarmament Affairs provides substantive and logistical support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). In conjunction with and in support of the work of the Committee, the Office organized three specialized regional seminars and workshops: in Kingston (May 2007); in Amman (September 2007); and in Gaborone (November 2007), with the aim of promoting regional dialogue and cooperation and raising awareness about obligations and requirements of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). These seminars/workshops were conducted by the Office using multi-donor extrabudgetary funds and enabled a total of 38 States from the

respective regions to participate in the workshops along with other States and representatives from regional, subregional and international organizations.

32. In July 2007, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, at the initiative of the Chairman of the 1540 Committee, organized a meeting to bring together States, relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations to facilitate information exchange on existing assistance programmes to advance the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

33. The Office for Disarmament Affairs is planning additional activities for 2008-2009 in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). This includes six regional workshops to promote capacity-building at the national and regional levels, in particular in the area of border controls.

34. During the reporting period, the Office for Disarmament Affairs provided administrative, organizational and substantive support to the third Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/67 to explore further ways and means to address within the United Nations the issue of missiles in all its aspects, including identifying areas where consensus can be reached.

35. In Asia and the Pacific, through its regional centre for Peace and Disarmament, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has continued to foster a regional security dialogue by co-organizing with the Government of Japan the nineteenth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, as well as the sixth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, which respectively discussed issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation that are of particular interest and relevance to the region.

36. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, through its regional centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development, collaborated with the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in joint advocacy efforts to promote of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in Latin America and the Caribbean region. As a result, the Bahamas, in 2007, and Barbados and Colombia, in 2008, ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, bringing the number of ratifications needed for the Treaty to enter into force to 35 out of the 44 requisite ratifications.

Promotion and support of disarmament efforts in the field of conventional disarmament, especially with regard to major weapons systems, small arms and light weapons, landmines and cluster munitions

37. The Office for Disarmament Affairs has continued to promote disarmament efforts in the area of conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons, anti-personnel mines, and cluster munitions, reflecting the increasing need to address the havoc that these weapons are inflicting on peoples' daily lives, particularly in conflict-ridden regions. The Office provided expert advice and organizational support to Member States in respect to certain conventional weapons in the fields of anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions and small arms and light weapons. In relation to small arms and light weapons, the Office was invited to

chair a number of meetings of the Geneva Process on Small Arms, a tripartite forum of Member States, international organizations and NGOs preparing for the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in July 2008.

38. On 13 June 2007, in cooperation with the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, the Albert Schweitzer Institute at Quinnipiac University, UNDP, the Project on Justice in Times of Transition, the Toledo International Centre for Peace, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the University for Peace, organized a Conference entitled "A Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America: the Pending Agenda 20 Years later" to discuss the achievements and challenges in the region which triggered a series of initiatives that enabled the region to turn the page on a long era of bitter armed conflicts and helped to open a new chapter of peace and development.

39. In its resolution 61/89 of 6 December 2007, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the feasibility, scope, and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, and to submit a report on the subject to the Assembly at its sixty-second session. A total of 100 Member States and 1 regional organization submitted their views, which are contained in document A/62/278 (Parts I and II) and Adds. 1-4. The Office for Disarmament Affairs provided administrative, organizational and substantive support to the Group of Governmental Experts established to examine the feasibility, scope, and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.

40. The Office for Disarmament Affairs also assisted the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/72 to consider further steps to enhance cooperation with regard to the issue of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

41. The Office for Disarmament Affairs operates and maintains two instruments aimed at increasing transparency in military matters which are based on separate General Assembly resolutions, namely, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which deals with international transfers of conventional weapons and the United Nations System for the Standardized Reporting of Military Expenditures, which seeks information on defence spending. Information included in these instruments is provided by Member States on a voluntary basis.

42. In the field of major conventional weapons, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to work with Member States to promote the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as an instrument to increase transparency in the international transfer of conventional weapons. Encouraging progress was realized following the inclusion and adoption of a standardized system for reporting, on an optional basis, transfers of small arms and light weapons. The Office continued its outreach efforts for the promotion of the Register through presentations at international meetings.

43. In General Assembly resolution 62/13, Member States have agreed to the proposal of the Office for Disarmament Affairs for a review of the operation and

further development of the United Nations instrument on military expenditures. The instrument was last reviewed shortly after its establishment in 1981. The review by governmental experts (which is scheduled to begin in 2010) will examine the further development of this instrument and its progress towards universal participation by Member States.

44. In an attempt to step up efforts to combat the scourge of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, including through its three regional centres, continues to organize workshops and other activities to support and promote the implementation of existing international disarmament and arms control norms at regional and subregional levels.

45. To that end, the Office, with the support of the donor community, organized a series of regional workshops aimed at promoting and assisting States in the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The workshops, which were held in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, during the period December 2007 to June 2008, with support from the regional centres, provided participants with information on the relevance of the instrument and addressed capacity-building needs to assist in its implementation at the national level. The workshops also served as tools for initiating country-specific needs assessments and provided increased opportunities for cooperation, coordination and collaboration among States and relevant regional and subregional organizations.

46. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, through its regional centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, conducted a training project on practical disarmament measures for civil society organizations in West Africa, and a year-long pilot project in security sector reform in Togo. As secretariat of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the Office organized the twenty-sixth and the twenty-seventh Ministerial Meetings of the Committee, respectively held in Cameroon and Angola.

47. In Latin America and the Caribbean, activities focused on building the capacity of States to address firearms-related issues. Most notably, a total of 1,100 law enforcement officials from seven countries received standardized training on investigative techniques for the prevention of illicit firearms trafficking. In addition, 272 members of Parliaments, of the media, and of civil society attended training activities aiming at developing effective policy responses to threats posed by firearms trafficking and associated violence.

48. The activities carried out by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, through its regional centres, also contribute to regional efforts to identify and revise outdated firearms legislation, and provided technical assistance for the destruction of weapons and for improved/secured stockpile management.

49. In April 2008, the Office for Disarmament Affairs prepared the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on small arms (S/2008/258), which was the subject of the Council's open debate held on 30 April. The report contains a number of new recommendations on how best the Council could contribute to combating the scourge of small arms. The Office is closely involved with the preparation for the forthcoming Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the

Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to be held from 14 to 18 July 2008.

III. Conclusions

50. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/257, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to implement the existing mandates derived from relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and other United Nations policymaking organs. The implementation of the mandates assigned to the Office, the objectives and the allocation of responsibilities are consistent with the approved programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (see A/62/643, para. 12). Furthermore, the reorganization of the former Department for Disarmament Affairs into the new Office for Disarmament Affairs and the appointment of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs in July 2007 did not have financial, administrative or budgetary implications and did not affect the objectives of the Office for the current biennium, as approved in the strategic framework for the period 2008-2009 (A/61/6 (Prog. 3)).

51. A Secretary-General's bulletin entitled "Organization of the Office for Disarmament Affairs" will be issued, revising the precedent bulletin on the issue. The revised bulletin, which outlines the core functions of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, is consistent with paragraph 1 of resolution 61/257 concerning the budgetary autonomy of the Office and the retention of the structures and functions of the former Department for Disarmament Affairs.

52. The activities described above demonstrate the growing tasks and demands asked of the newly established Office for Disarmament Affairs. As indicated, the implementation of resolution 61/257 did not result in any net increase in the regular budget of the Office. In contrast, additional responsibilities resulting from mandates entrusted to the Office for Disarmament Affairs, such as those related to resolution 60/288, as well as the significant increase in the number of activities organized by the Office in response to requests from Member States, required additional resources, both human and financial.

53. In light of the limited resources available through the regular budget, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has intensified its resource mobilization efforts, aimed in particular at ensuring the sustainability of the increased number of activities in the areas covered by the mandates entrusted to the Office by the General Assembly.

54. The financial stability and sustainability of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which currently relies significantly on extrabudgetary funds particularly with regard to the activities of its three regional centres, remains a core and integral challenge to the operational capacity of the Office. Strengthening the Office for Disarmament Affairs to better support a more proactive United Nations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation will require additional resources.

55. Additional resources would contribute to strengthening the capability of the Office for Disarmament Affairs to deliver its mandates, including comprehensive monitoring and in-depth analysis of salient and emerging issues and trends, effective policy formulation, timely expert and sound advice and assistance to the Secretary-General, and effective support to Member States to facilitate negotiations and

deliberations in the various multilateral bodies, including the Conference on Disarmament, as well as under international treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Mine Ban Convention, the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention, meetings of States Parties to the various Protocols and other related processes. It would also strengthen the ability of the United Nations to implement the relevant elements of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Securing regular budget funding for the biennium 2010-2011 is therefore essential.

56. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to foster its regional presence through its three regional centres. It is noteworthy that the work of the Consultative Mechanism for the Reorganization of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa was successfully concluded during the period under review. In its resolution 62/216, the General Assembly supported the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa by deciding that "three posts be established and added to the structure of the Centre, and funded from the regular budget" and recommending that "the operating costs of the Regional Centre be funded from the regular budget".

57. The Office for Disarmament Affairs has been working closely with the Government of Nepal to ensure a smooth and timely relocation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific to Kathmandu. The inauguration of the Centre, scheduled for mid-August 2008, is both timely and opportune. It will foster regional cooperation in support of disarmament and non-proliferation activities with the support (financial and human) of the countries of the region.

58. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean continues its partnerships with Member States of the region, regional and other intergovernmental organizations, as well as the donor community in implementing various projects in the field of disarmament.

59. The establishment of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the appointment of the High Representative was a vital step in the Secretary-General's effort to revitalize the disarmament agenda and to meet the increasingly heavy and complex responsibilities assigned to the Organization by Member States in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation both regarding weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. In promoting his proposal to establish the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Secretary-General underlined the need to strengthen the institutional foundation and management mechanism of the United Nations so that it may succeed in fulfilling its central role and primary responsibility in support of Member States in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts.